

**For Immediate Release**

**“HOLIDAYS AT HAMPTON” CELEBRATES THE YULETIDE SEASON WITH SPECIAL PROGRAMS AT HAMPTON NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE IN TOWSON**

***Public invited to join in the free festivities December 9 – 11 including carriage rides, period crafts, storytelling, musical & dance performances, holiday shopping and evening “candlelight” tours***

**Towson, Maryland.** Get into the holiday spirit early with “Holidays at Hampton” where the public can celebrate the season at Hampton National Historic Site. Visitors will experience 2 centuries of holiday traditions at Towson’s only National Park – all of the festivities are *free* and open to the public. Special evening tours, carriage rides, period crafts, musical & dance performances, African American storytelling and unique holiday shopping in the Museum Shop are just part of the revelries taking place during the “Holidays at Hampton” Yuletide weekend of Friday, December 9 through Sunday, December 11, 2011. To commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the Civil War, there will be a special emphasis on the Civil War years during “Holiday’s at Hampton”.

**Friday, December 9 & Saturday, December 10: Evening “Candlelight” Tours**

**6 - 8:30PM:** By popular demand - Hampton National Historic Site offers Evening “Candlelight” Tours of the Mansion from 6:00PM – 8:30PM on Friday, December 9 and Saturday, December 10. Hampton Mansion, described in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century as “a palace in the wilderness”, will open its doors for visitors to tour the holiday splendor of the rooms and Great Hall. Each room reflects a different period in the history of the Mansion, with authentic reproduction Yuletide decorations in each room.

***On Friday evening December 9 only:*** The **Junior League of Baltimore “Larks”** will perform holiday music in the Great Hall of the Mansion during the “Candlelight” Tours. **Lively Holiday Music** and sing-along will be performed in the Orangery by **Doug Jimerson**.

**Saturday, December 10: Period Activities and Crafts; Mansion Tours**  
**10AM - 4:00PM**

**Noon-4PM: Period Craft Activities** will be offered for all ages at the Orangery. Visitors will make their own Victorian greeting card, design a “gold gilded” frame, make a dried fruit garland, and more. *Activities and crafts are subject to change and available on a first come, first served basis.*

**Noon-4 PM: Arts and Crafts** in the lower house that enslaved children would have played with such as dolls made from corn husk or straw.

**10AM, 11AM & 12PM: Hourly Guided House Tours** will be offered on the hour beginning at 10:00AM

**1-1:30 PM: Dance Performance** with children and families.

**1-4PM: Carriage Rides by “Oh My Heart! Carriages”:** (\$10 an adult, \$5 16 and younger, under 1 free) timed carriage ride tickets will be available beginning at one. ***Seating is limited. No reservations will be accepted – first come, first served basis.***

**1PM-4PM: “Open House”** starts at 1:00PM. Hampton Mansion will feature an open house where visitors will be able to walk through at their own pace. Park staff will tell the exciting stories of Hampton at Yuletide. Each room will highlight how Christmas was celebrated at different periods that the Ridgely family lived at Hampton, from 1783 - 1948. Learn how the holidays were observed by the Ridgely family, their slaves and tenant farmers on the estate.

**1 PM & 2 PM: African American Tales of the Season:** At the Lower House, join Park Ranger and storyteller Angela Roberts-Burton at the Lower House as she recounts Christmas in the Big House, Christmas in the Quarter. The holidays were festive and bright for many but celebrated very differently - take this opportunity to learn how the enslaved African Americans celebrated the holiday season.

**2:30 PM** Party like it's 1861 - One hundred and fifty years ago, the Civil War was still in its opening stages. Seen as a "romantic" war, the full horror of the conflict was yet to come. Far from the battlefields, upper class civilians still held balls, some serving as fundraisers to support the war effort. Join Choregraphie Antique on Saturday, Dec. 10 from 2:30-3:30 for an afternoon of dancing. See the Choregraphie Antique dancers resplendent in their Victorian ball gowns and long-tailed coats as they waltz, quadrille and polka their way at Hampton! A special childrens' session will run from 2:00 - 2:30 where children and their parents can learn the dances together!

**6-8 PM: Arts & Crafts** in the Orangery.

**6-8 PM: Lively Holiday Music** and sing-along will be performed in the Great Hall by Doug Jimerson.

**Sunday, December 11: Carriage Rides (FEE), Period Activities & Crafts**  
**10AM-4PM**

**1-4PM: Carriage Rides by “Oh My Heart! Carriages”:** (\$10 an adult, \$5 16 and younger, under 1 free) timed carriage ride tickets will be available beginning at one. ***Seating is limited. No reservations will be accepted – first come, first served basis.***

**1PM & 3PM: African American Storytelling at the Lower House:** Join storyteller Robert Smith as he portrays a free African American chef who has been hired by the Ridgely Family to prepare Christmas dinner. In addition, Mr. Smith will tell traditional African and African-Americans folktales.

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**About Hampton National Historic Site:** Hampton National Historic Site, the northernmost plantation in the National Park Service, is located at 535 Hampton Lane, Towson, Maryland 21286. Its remaining 63 acres include many original outbuildings: the late Georgian-style Mansion, Slave Quarters, Lower (Farmhouse or Overseer's) House, Dairy, Ice House, Stables and formal Gardens. For further information about hours and tours, please call Hampton National Historic Site at 410-823-1309. Admission to Hampton National Historic Site is **free**. [www.historichampton.org](http://www.historichampton.org) or [www.nps.gov/hamp](http://www.nps.gov/hamp)

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